

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 and 18-22 remain pending in the application, claims 16, 17, 23 and 24 being canceled herein.

Claims 1-7 and 9-24 over Nabkel

In the Office Action, claims 1-7 and 9-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 5,963,626 to Nabkel ("Nabkel"). Claims 16, 17, 23 and 24 are canceled herein, thereby mooting the rejection in that regard. Otherwise, the Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claims 1-7, 9 and 10 recite a secured message authorization module that allows a caller to provide an authorization code corresponding to only one of a plurality of users such that their voice message is secured for play back only by that one user. Claims 11-15 and 18-22 recite prompting a calling party for an authorized security code corresponding to only one of a plurality of users authorized to play back a voice message, and securing the voice message for access by only the user authorized to play back the voice message.

Thus, the pending claims relate to a calling party providing someone else's PIN or other authorization (i.e., a PIN corresponding to a desired user who they want to play back the message). The PIN is the user's--not the calling party's as in conventional devices.

Nabkel is such a conventional device. According to Nabkel, a user of an answering device leaves messages for pickup by various callers. The particular caller is identified by a pre-stored PIN relating to the caller (not to the user). (See, e.g., Nabkel, col. 4, lines 41-42 "the calling party is prompted to enter **their** PIN" (emphasis added)). Caller ID information for the caller may alternatively be used.

Claims 1-7, 9-15 and 18-22 require provision by a calling party desiring to record a voice message to input an authorization code of the one user that they want to play back their voice message. Nabkel fails to disclose such a device or method.

Nabkel teaches that only the user of the telephone answering device need enter their PIN to access messages left for them. According to the present invention, in operation both the calling party AND the called party (i.e., the user) must enter the PIN or other authorization code.

For at least the foregoing reasons, claims 1-7, 9-15 and 18-22 are patentable over the prior art of record. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the foregoing rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1 and 8 over Carleton

Claims 1 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 5,966,351 to Carleton et al. ("Carleton"). The Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

As discussed above with respect to Nabkel, claims 1 and 8 recite a secured message authorization module that allows a caller to provide an authorization code corresponding to only one of a plurality of users such that their voice message is secured for play back only by that one user.

The passages of Carleton cited by the Examiner in rejecting the independent claim 1, particularly col. 1, lines 14-24; col. 2, lines 60-67, disclose nothing more than a conventional telephone answering system wherein a user accesses their own mailbox by entering their own authorization code.

Carleton fails to disclose provision of the user's authorization code by a calling party recording a voice message, as required by claims 1 and 8.

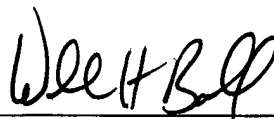
Claim 8 is dependent from claim 1, and is patentable for all the reasons that claim 1 is patentable.

For at least all the above reasons, claims 1 and 8 are patentable over the prior art of record. The Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Conclusion

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the subject application is in condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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